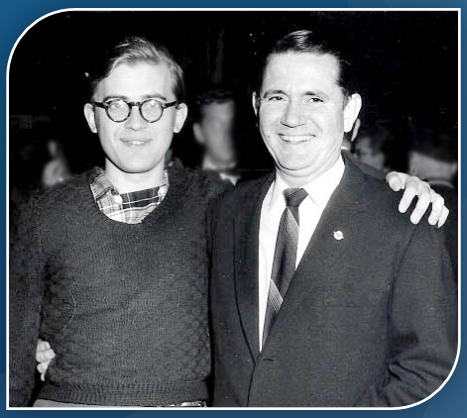
Oklahoma Chess Monthly

SEPTEMBER 2017

Chess News and Chess History for Oklahoma



Jerry Spann (right) with Bent Larsen

In This Issue:

- Jerry Spann Part II
- Jerry Spann Memorial 2017 Report
- Advait Patel Earns IM Title
- Plus Game of the Month, Puzzles, Top 25 List, and more.

Last month we looked at Oklahoman Jerry Spann's historic three-year term as USCF President and the turn-around in U.S. organized chess. Now we will see his post-president career as America's chess diplomat and influential mentor.

Jerry Spann: Part II Post-President Years

by Tom Braunlich

After his successful USCF presidency (see last month's Part I), in 1960 Jerry Spann jumped right into the roles of "chess diplomat" and "organizational mentor" on all levels of the chess world — internationally, nationally, and locally.

In each of these areas he made his mark, and although he was to die young (in 1968) his protégés were in place to help the Fischer Boom of 1972 come about and take advantage of it. Internationally, he was America's leading chess diplomat, the FIDE vice president for our zone, the U.S. delegate to the annual FIDE congresses, and networking to bring more international chess to the USA. On the national

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level, he was still active politically at the annual USCF membership meetings, chairman of the foreign affairs commmittee, and helping guide new president Fred Cramer with continuing membership drive efforts (which Cramer modeled after Spann's system). And at the local level he concentrated on mentoring new young players and potential tournament directors.

Often these many efforts "leaked" into each other… somewhat spectacularly. D Ballard (who was to become Oklahoma's first home-grown master) tells one such story that occurred while playing some games at Spann's house:

"During that afternoon a very large package arrived while we were playing. Alice answered the door and received it from the delivery person. Jerry brought it in and began opening it. As soon as he saw what it was, he said, 'Castro said he would send me one.' The package contained an ornate chess table that had been used at the 1966 Havana Chess Olympiad. I was just amazed."

"As soon as he saw what it was, he said, 'Castro said he would send me one.' The package contained an ornate chess table that had been used at the 1966 Havana Chess Olympiad. I was just amazed."

D Ballard

1. INTERNATIONAL LEGACY

Spann had begun making international chess contacts when president, but his main introduction to that came when he led the U.S. team to the World Student Team Championship in Leningrad (USSR) in 1960. He was officially acting as team captain, and to the surprise of everyone the U.S. team impressively won the event. (The American team was lead by Bill Lombardy and included five other strong masters such as Anthony Saidy. The Soviet team was led by Spassky with five other future GMs.) The story of this event has been told in the OCQ in an article by Frank Berry, and can be read in Chess Life Online here: http://www.uschess.org/content/view/10765/568/

While there, Spann met with the Soviets with the goal of organizing a USA-USSR team match to be held in 1961, similar to previous matches held in the '40s and '50s. He got along very well with the Russians even though this was perhaps the worst time period of the Cold War. But not in chess. Saidy, who is currently writing his memoirs, says Spann was so busy as both captain and diplomat he spent little time with him during the event. The proposed USA-USSR match eventually fell through, but Spann would continue to revive the idea in the coming years.

Fischer vs. The Russians

Although Spann was getting along well with the Russians, the young Bobby Fischer was not. The young GM, who had obliterated the field at the Interzonal qualifying tournament in 1961, could

Jerry Spann leads the team to Leningrad…

finish only 4th in the Candidates tournament in 1962 to select the challenger for Botvinnik, the world champion. Fischer charged the Russians with "fixing" the event by agreeing to make quick draws with each other while fighting their hardest against him, thus saving energy. It was a legitimate charge considering the event was a grueling 28-round affair.

In response Jerry Spann led the U.S. delegation to FIDE in spearheading new rules for the Candidates tournament at the next FIDE Congress, and succeeded in changing the system from the its 8-player quadruple round robin tourney to a series of elimination matches among the eight candidates. This system proved to be more fair and led to many exciting matches for several decades, although it was also more difficult for organizers to fund and administrate, with matches lasting 12 games or more. But it was one of Spann's international legacies.

The Mayor of Stockholm (center) congratulates FIDE President Folke Rogard on the success of the World Congress. FIDE Vice President Jerry Spann (second from left) gives his report on this meeting on the opposite page.

October, 1962

Spann continued to represent USA at the FIDE Congress throughout the first half of the '60s, a job which required patience with the slow-moving bureaucracy. One of his other goals at this time was to convince FIDE to adopt the ELO rating system that Spann had implemented successfully in the USA. FIDE dragged its feet on committing to it during Spann's time there, but they did eventually institute it in 1970 and it is still in use today, the legacy of Arapad Elo, Jerry Spann, and Kenneth Harkness.

Spann's network contacts with both international organizers and many individual chess stars would however also help in his role as a leader of USCF.

FIDE AT WORK. A scene from the 1963 Congress in Basel, Switzerland.

NOVEMBER, 1963 Jerry Spann is seated in the middle by the American flag.

2. USA NATIONAL LEGACY

Jerry Spann's post-president work in the USCF can be summarized as having two main goals: mentoring new national leaders, and organizing top-class international events in America. He strongly believed that America's top players, other than Fischer, were not getting the experience they needed to compete at the top levels and pushed for every way he could think of to bring top players here to compete. Such events not only helped our top talents, but also he believed were good for the sport in general by attracting public attention

International Recruiter

Spann was the man when it came to organizing international events in the U.S., as it is through him that invitations to foreign grandmasters were communicated and arranged, although often the final event that actually occurred was much different than originally envisioned.

The prime example of this was the famous Piatgorsky Cup tournament of 1963 in California. This started out in 1962 as Spann's effort to again arrange another USA-USSR team match, to be held in New York in 1963. Using telegrams to communicate (which used sparse language like modern day "tweets" due to their expense) Spann communicated with his opposite number in the Soviet Union, L.

Abramov, to negotiate for the team match. Such matches had taken place several times since the '40s, with the USA getting beat every time. But Spann was confident that with Fischer in the lead and such talents as Lombardy and Evans along with Reshevsky that the Americans had fair chances in such a match, and an upset victory in New York would be a great "cold war propagands victory." The U.S. state department was convinced to support the idea with regard to the Soviet travel to the USA (a previous sticking point).

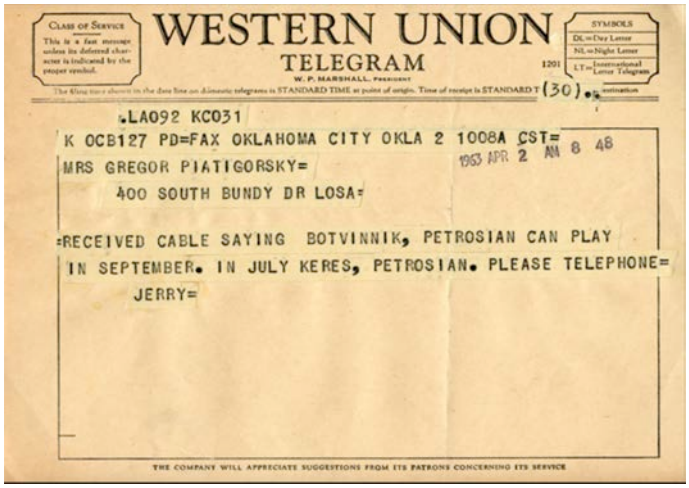
At the same time a Fischer-Botvinnik match had been proposed and Spann was also making progress trying to negotiate that possibility.

It is important to remember history when considering this work — the cold war was at its most dangerous period in 1962. The Cuban Missile Crisis occurred in the middle of these negotiations!

Initially, neither of these efforts came through — Botvinnik lost his title to Petrosian in early 1963, scuttling a possible Fischer-Botvinnik confrontation, and the USA-USSR team match also fell through at the last minute — however, before it was completely dead Spann was able to "morph" it into something else.

Working with Jacqueline Piatgorsky, a top female player from Santa Monica, California, who was married to wealthy cello virtuoso Gregor Piatgorsky and was a prominent chess supporter and expressed interest in funding and hosting a first-class international tournament. She and Spann were able to morph the team match negotiations into the USSR sending a delegation of top players to the first "Piatgorsky Cup" in Summer, 1963.

Spann negotiated for Petrosian and Keres to play, with Korchnoi as a backup for Petrosian if the new world champion was not up for the event after his grueling title match. Petrosian did chose it as his first tournament as world champion — the first champion to play in the USA since Alekhine at Pasedena in 1932.



WESTERN UNION
TELEGRAM

(30)

LA092 KC031
K OCB127 PD=FAX OKLAHOMA CITY OKLA 2 1008A CST=
1963 APR 2 AM 8 48
MRS GREGOR PIATIGORSKY=
400 SOUTH BUNDY DR LOSA=

=RECEIVED CABLE SAYING BOTVINNIK, PETROSIAN CAN PLAY IN SEPTEMBER. IN JULY KERES, PETROSIAN. PLEASE TELEPHONE=
JERRY=

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

Spann with the Piatgorskys, cover photo showing the Cup Trophy.

The rest of the field included all top GMs as well: Najdorf, Gligoric, Reshevsky, Panno, and Olafsson …

… but there was no Bobby Fischer. Bobby was of course one of the two Americans invited, but he insisted on getting a hefty appearance fee that wasn't being offered to anyone else. Spann and others tried to reason with him, but to no avail. This wasn't the first time Spann had been called upon to deal with Fischer's increasing demands. He had actually taken Bobby's side in the dispute with the organizers that prematurely ended the Fischer-Reshevsky match in 1961. But Fischer was bound to drop out of the next world

championship cycle, to everyone's great disappointment, in spite of pleas from his supporters like Spann.

CHESS FANS follow the action on large wall boards. Note the clock faces showing the time taken by the players.

However, no doubt Fischer came to regreat his decision about the Piatgorsky when he saw this first class event with a nice prize fund come off smoothly, with Benko in his place, at the beautiful chandelier-clad Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, with a separate room for spectators which every day numbered about 500.

When the Piatgorsky Cup came together, Spann went into promoter mode, one of the many hats he still wore for the USCF. He for example wrote to the White House and got an official response saying President Kennedy was delighted to hear about the tournament and wished them good luck, etc.

Jerry Spann writes about the Piatgorsky Cup

THE PIATIGORSKY CUP

Chess in America assumes heightened stature with the rising caliber of our tournaments. An effective means to achieve this end is by stimulating a greater public interest in chess. We hope that the PIATIGORSKY CUP serves this purpose by creating an opportunity for a select group of outstanding chess exponents to meet in organized competition, thus awakening American interest in an important cultural activity.

The PIATIGORSKY CUP, which may rank as the greatest International All-Grandmaster Chess Tournament ever held in America, has the added objective of furthering an increased mutual understanding and rapport with other nations.

Mrs. Gregor Piatigorsky, president of the PIATIGORSKY FOUNDATION and wife of the internationally renowned cellist, has contributed significantly to the development of chess in this country and abroad by bringing to the public many noted events, both locally and nationally.

The debut of the PIATIGORSKY CUP, made possible by the time and energy given by Mr. and Mrs. Piatigorsky, marks an important milestone in the annals of American as well as international chess.

JERRY SPANN, Vice-President
Federation Internationale des Echecs

Spann gave the welcoming speech at the opening ceremony, and a sumptuous banquet for 200 saw Petrosian and Keres receive their prizes for a first place tie.

When the second Piatgorsky Cup came about in 1966, Fischer accepted his invitation without any talk about an appearance fee! Spassky won the second cup, with Fischer just a half point behind. But unfortunately it was the last in the series. Recently the World Chess Hall of Fame in St. Louis had an excellent exhibit about the Piatgorsky Cup and their archives own much of the historic artifacts from it including the scoresheets of the players and the custom trophy.

Mentorship

Spann's work on the national level also featured his mentorship of like-minded USCF politicians who were considered protégés of his leadership style and philosophy, and who led the USCF into the Fischer Boom era. Among these were Fred Cramer (president 1961-63) and Ed Edmondson (president 1964-66 and executive director 1966-1975).

Past USCF Presidents get together. Jerry with his successor, Fred Cramer, during the 1966 U.S. Championship.

Edmondson was to play a big role in paving the road for the always-difficult Bobby Fischer to come back to the world championship cycle and make his historic run to the championship victory over Spassky in 1972, which in turn became the bittersweet zenith of chess in the U.S. The boom still reverberates here to this day. Though this occurred after Jerry's death in 1968, one can say he had a hand in that legacy as well through his adherents like Edmondson (although of course practically the

whole U.S. chess community worked unselfishly and tirelessly to push Fischer forward at this time).

Federation affairs are expedited in New York executive sessions held regularly at start of U. S. Championship, in December. Here you see VP Dave Hoffmann, Pres. Fred Cramer, U. S. Championship Chairman Maurice Kasper, Edward Lasker, and Int. Affairs Chairman Jerry Spann at reception for players given by Kasper.

3. OKLAHOMA LEGACY

All through this time while working at the higher levels, Spann was also busy locally in Oklahoma doing the same thing, including trying to find new protégé tournament directors here and mentor them to seed the future of Oklahoma chess.

One of them who Spann believed had a future on the national chess scene was Richard Dermer, the owner of the Hideaway Pizza restaurant in Stillwater, Oklahoma. Richard, who passed away in 2014, was a class B player in the 1960s who Spann roped into tournament organizing. He made a comment at one annual meeting that the next Oklahoma Open could be held at the Student Union in Stillwater instead of the usual Tulsa or OKC sites, and Spann immediately tasked him with organizing it! (This was a typical tactic of Spann – as well as of his other protégés like the Berry brothers. If you make the mistake of suggesting something, it got turned back on you!) At one point Dermer was offered the executive director job at the USCF, but turned it down as he didn't want to leave his business in Stillwater (lucky for him, as it would have been him having to deal with Fischer in 1972 instead of Edmondson!).

Richard Dermer (left) playing GM Larry Evans in a simul at the OSU Student Union in Stillwater, October 1969.

Dermer was among those who took over in Oklahoma after Spann's death in 1968. He started the North American Open in 1971. Later in life Dermer gave up on official chess work but became a popular president of the American Kiteflyers Association and traveled the world promoting his other great hobby.

Spann had started out doing local tournaments like the Oklahoma Open in the '50s and continued them while president (often relying on friend George Koltanowsky to direct) and on through his post-president years.

Spann's other best known protégés of course were **Jim and Frank Berry**. They got their start assisting at Spann tournaments, and eventually both became national TDs. Together they organized literally hundreds of tournaments and were the primary shapers of chess in this region from the 1960s up to today (with some time away in the 1980s required for career reasons). As has been documented here in OCM before, Frank became an International Arbiter and highest-level TD, as well as a chess historian and writer and Class A player. Jim became an expert player and eventually president of the USCF in 2009-2011.

These directors and others were in place when the Fischer Boom happened in 1972 and were able to grow chess in Oklahoma at that time as new players flooded into the tournaments here as well as across the

country. Soon we were having monthly weekend Swiss tournaments at Oklahoma sites that would regularly draw 100 players. This in turn led to the greatest flowering of master and expert players in the state, with about a dozen homegrown masters appearing here in the post-Fischer years, a time which has never been equaled since during the scholastic chess years.

Local Memories and Protégés

Spann also was a generous mentor to young players in many ways, including D Ballard, Joe Hill, and others.

D Ballard remembers, "Jerry Spann was a fabulous promoter of chess and we all owe him a lot of credit for that. About 1965 Robert Bond and I played a four game match. Jerry came to the motel where we played and refereed. He then gave me a ride back to my dorm."

"Now as with most promoters there were some minor flaws," Ballard says. "He tended to exaggerate some facts ... just to promote chess, you understand. He himself was about 1750 playing strength. He and I played two slow clock games about late 1966 in his own house that showed this." (See one of Spann's tournament games, printed next page.) Most important, however, is that he did a tremendous job of promoting the USCF and chess in Oklahoma."

Joe Hill recalls, "Jerry was very active in chess organization during my 'initial' playing days. One of my first opponents was his daughter, Cathy. I really did not have much contact with him but I did visit him in the Paseo district in OKC at his place of business, two or three times, for lunch and chess. Today Paseo is artsy but this would have been in 1961 (before I met D and the Berry twins). I had to be driving my mother's car, just having turned 16. … He was quite encouraging to me and other young players to pursue chess activity. He loved his cigars. And in my opinion he was the reason Ed Edmondson became USCF president (and of course Ed is the primary person to get Fischer into the championship routine in the late 60s). So Jerry did indeed have a large impact on Fischer becoming world champion."

Jim Berry tells several funny stories that are revealing about Spann's personality. "One time at a tournament that Spann was directing, D Ballard was called upon to adjudicate a game that had been suspended with one player down the exchange but having some compensation for it. Ballard, by far the strongest player around in these days (he won a simul game with Bobby Fischer in 1964), was analyzing it closely and struggling with his ruling, and eventually decided it should be a draw with best play. Just then Jerry Spann stepped in and declared the game to be a win, not a draw! 'How can you do that?' Ballard said. 'No problem, I just did,' Spann said."

"Then there was the time he 'crashed' a simultaneous at the *Mechanics Chess Club* in San Francisco," Jim Berry recalls. "We were shown a picture of him giving a simultaneous exhibition at the club with a ring of players at boards in a circle, looking for all the world like Reshevsky or Fischer giving an exhibition. We wondered, 'What is this?' It turned out that he crashed it — when the master giving the simul was on the other side of the room out of sight, Spann jumped out into the middle of the ring, posed at one of the boards, and had a photographer snap his picture!"

Berry says Spann brought top foreign GMs to Oklahoma to give rare simultaneous exhibitions here, including Gligoric, Benko, and Tifunovic. It isn't known how many of those he crashed.

Numerous other stories exist about Spann giving rides to tournaments to players, paying for hotel rooms for youngstrs who couldn't afford to go, etc. At awards ceremonies he frequently would pass the hat to get spectators to donate to the prize fund.

"What was Spann's philosophy of leadership? I don't think he had one," Jim Berry explains. "He was always reacting to keep chess alive, and would do anything that

might help, no matter how small. He had no time for a philosophy… But he did remember to have fun along the way, which was one reason he was so popular."

The Player

Jerry Spann was a player too, and often played in open tournaments when he had the time, and could be formidable. Pictured at right is one of his games annotated by IM George Koltanowsky for *Chess Life* in 1956 when the U.S. Open was in Oklahoma City.

Jerry Spann Memorial

Jerry Spann was diagnosed with cancer in 1967, yet continued to play tournament chess up until within six months of the end.

He passed away on January 5, 1968.

Seldom, if ever, has there been such an outpouring of testimonials of love and admiration for a chess official as that which immediately followed this news about the death of Jerry Spann. Many of them were quoted in Part I of this tribute, last month, and they represent only a small slice.

Immediately there were calls for the USCF to establish 'a living chess memorial suitable to his memory." (See announcement by Marshall Roland here, from Chess Life.)

JERRY SPANN MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

As we were going to press, USCF President Marshall Rohland notified us that he will serve as first Chairman of the Jerry Spann Memorial Committee. Other members to date are Fred Cramer, E. B. Edmondson, M. J. Kasper, and Donald D. Schultz.

Chairman Rohland states that the Committee's initial task will be to receive suggestions from the members as to the type of living chess memorial most suitable to Jerry's memory. If you have suggestions for the Committee, please write to the Chairman or to any of the members. And if you wish to serve as a Committee member, please write to Mr. Rohland at 4846 N. 24th Place, Milwaukee, Wis. 53209.

CHESS LIFE

Ideas included a scholarship fund in his name or a national memorial tournament. A committee was formed for the purpose. As you can see from the pictured correspondence on the next page, while the committee was getting started Richard Dermer, then presidnt of the OCA (Oklahoma Chess Association) and its members voted to permanently rename the Oklahoma Open and State Championship tournament the Jerry Spann Memorial.

JERRY SPANN PLAYS CHESS, TOO

In a report to CHESS LIFE on the U.S. Open at Oklahoma City in 1956, Tournament Director George Koltanowski had considerable praise for Jerry's zeal and drive in organizational matters, but he indicated that Jerry's playing strength was something which shouldn't be discussed over the telephone. In the twenty months which have elapsed since then, Jerry has played in several strong tournaments, and while CHESS LIFE has never had to dust off the large type for the announcement of a tournament win by our genial President, we are keeping the dust-cloth handy. The game which follows—annotated by Jerry—shows the reason for our preparedness. Played recently against Jack Shaw, New Mexico State Champion, and a consistent plus-score man in U.S. Opens, the game shows that the 300 plus gap between their respective USCF ratings may be closing rapidly.

COLLE SYSTEM

JERRY SPANN		JACK SHAW	
White		Black	
1. P-Q4	N-KB3	14. PxP(e)	N(2)-B3
2. N-KB3	P-KN3	15. KR-K1	Q-Q1
3. P-K3	B-N2	16. N(4)-K5	NxP
4. B-Q3	O-O	17. NxBP!(f)	RxN
5. QN-Q2	P-Q3	18. BxPch	K-N1
6. O-O	QN-Q2	19. BxRch	KxB
7. P-K4	P-K4	20. BxP!	BxB
8. P-B3	N-K1(a)	21. Q-R7ch	B-N2
9. N-B4!	P-KR3(b)	22. N-K5ch	K-B1
10. B-K3	K-R2	23. N-N6ch	K-B2
11. Q-B2(c)	Q-K2	24. N-K5ch	
12. P-QN4(d)	PxP	Draw by perpetual check.	
13. BPxP	P-Q4		

NOTES:

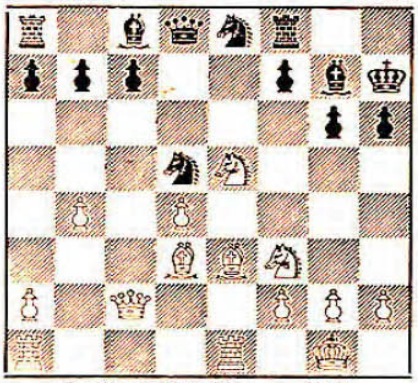
(a) With P-KB4 in mind, but my N-B4 reply short-circuits this idea. If 9. ....., P-KB4; 10. PxBP; 11. PxP, PxP; 12. N(4)xP!, BxP; 13. B-B4ch, K-R1; 14. NxB and Black is lost.

(b) The Black KN4 square is getting mighty inviting.

(c) A deeper move than I am usually capable of.

(d) P-QR4 is also a possibility, as is N-K1 to be followed by P-KB4.

(e) White captures with alacrity because Black cannot take White's QNP. Just in time Black notes that White's QB will move to QR3 via B1 before Black can get all the heavy pieces out of the way. Any defense employed by Black will go awry—look at the dazzling continuations for White should Black grab the pawn.



Position after 16. ....., NxP

Origin of "The Jerry Spann Memorial"
Correspondence quoted in Chess Life, 1968

January 19, 1968

Dear Dick,

Jerry Spann was one of my dearest friends, and I miss him personally even more than I miss him as a chess organizer. As you surmised we might, USCF does intend to establish a national Jerry Spann Memorial to perpetuate forever the memory of how much he did for American chess. However, that should in no way detract from the desires or plans of you and his other fellow Oklahomans to do something of a similar nature within your state. Please do whatever comes from the heart in this regard, and I know that it will be right.

Fraternally,
E. B. Edmondson

February 7, 1968

Dear Col. Edmondson:

Enclosed are the results of the Oklahoma Open held February 3rd and 4th. . . . . The players present voted overwhelmingly to rename the tournament the Jerry Spann Memorial Tournament. . . . .

Sincerely yours,
Richard H. Dermer

This was soon codified into the OCA Bylaws and for decades the Jerry Spann Memorial was the name of the state championship tournament.

Unfortunately, in 2003 when a schism occurred in chess factions in Oklahoma, the OCA changed many things in the bylaws including the name of its state championship, which is now called the Oklahoma Open without the Jerry Spann name.

The Oklahoma Chess Foundation (OCF) has endeavored to keep the Jerry Spann Memorial name tradition alive however as the traditional title event, although not official, since it is the long-established dedication to the memory of Jerry Spann.

The 2017 Jerry Spann Memorial was held this month, September 2-3, 2017 in Oklahoma City. See the report on page 13.

Considering this background it is imperative to continue the Jerry Spann Memorial into the future to honor the great chess leader and keep his memory alive. Let there always be an annual "Jerry Spann Memorial" to acknowledge "the man who will never be forgotten" for all he did for chess in America.

Hopefully these two articles on the chess career of Jerry Spann will remind players about him — and all the others who have fought hard and worked selflessly for the sport of chess over the years. May they, and the sport of chess itself that Jerry so loved, never be forgotten.

Note: The illustrations in this article are mostly taken from *Chess Life* and *Chess Review* magazines. Exceptions are the above portrait from the archives of Leah Koltanowsky, on the California Chess Archives website, and the telegram sample from the Piatgorsky negotiations is also from this site. The Dermer photo is courtesy of Marti Dermer.

TOP 25

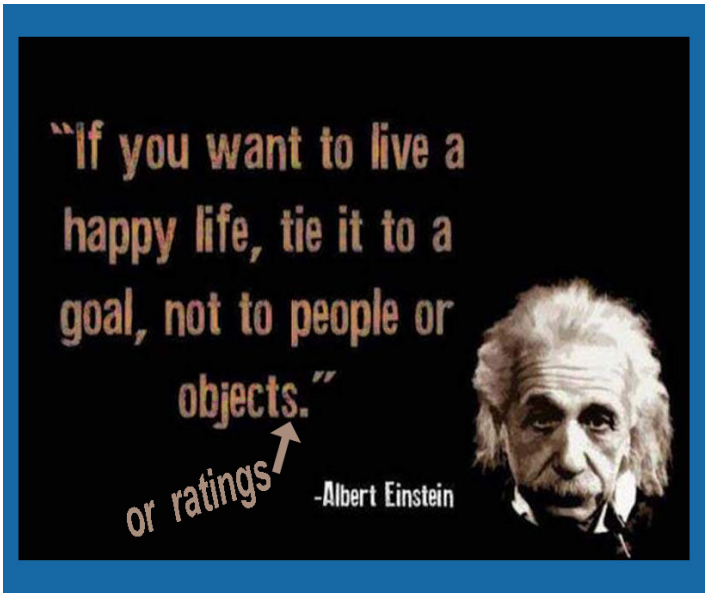
For XXX 2017

Top 25 Active Oklahoma Players				
	Player	This Month	Change +/-	
1	Advait Patel	2550	30	
2	Daniel Ng	2273	0	
3	Howard Zhong	2257	22	
4	Mark Hulsey	2221	0	
5	Tom Braunlich	2203	0	
6	Sergey Galant	2203	0	
7	Tom Amburn	2200	0	
8	Chibuzo C Ilonze	2158	-20	
9	David Zelnick	2154	0	
10	Joshua Alexander	2142	0	
11	Jamal I. El Chamieh	2124	0	
12	Anthony Paolercio	2121	0	
13	Ryan Farell	2089	0	
14	Chuck Johnson	2087	0	
15	John Cope	2084	0	
16	Tom Patton	2080	0	
17	Michael Nugent	2077	0	
18	James Tyner	2074	0	
19	David Luscomb	2068	0	
20	Charles D Unruh	2062	0	
21	Veronika Zilajeva	2053	-18	▼
22	Matt Dalthorp	2052	0	
23	Alan Islas	2024	0	
24	Logan Zahare	2008	+8	▲
25	Charles M Unruh	2005	0	

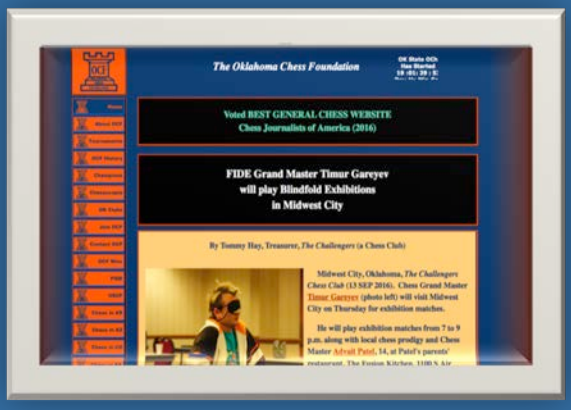
Player of the Month

Howard Zhong

Howard Zhong came from behind to win the 2017 Jerry Spann Memorial. Read the article on Spann for the origin of this event.



Visit
www.ocfchess.org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will play Blindfold Exhibitions
in Midwest City

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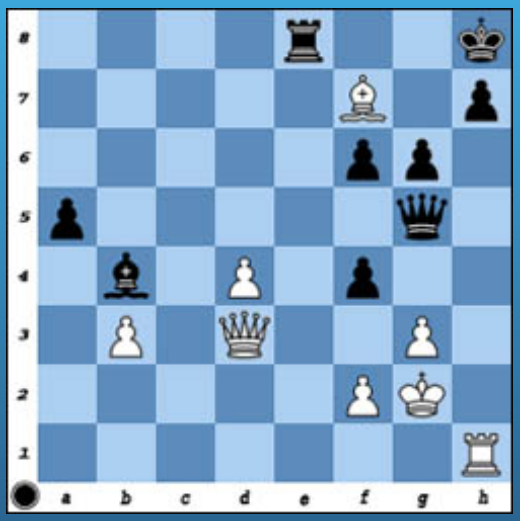
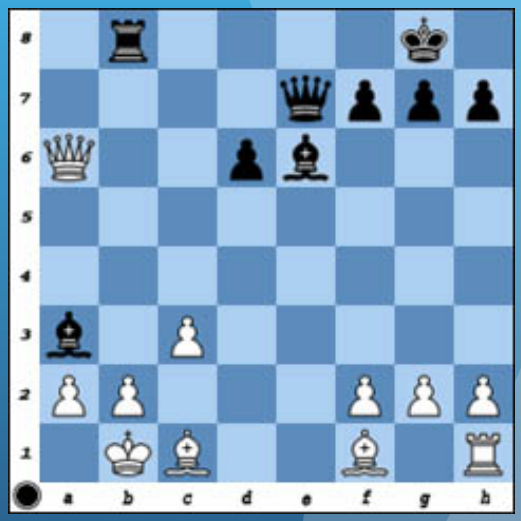
PUZZLES

Answers Next Page



BLACK to move and win. (Easy)



BLACK to move and win. (Medium)

Advait Patel in 2017 (Photo: NewsOK.com)

PATEL EARNS INTERNATIONAL MASTER TITLE

Advait Patel, 15, of Midwest City, earned his third and final IM norm in August at the U.S. Masters tournament in North Carolina. He has been sporting a 2500+ rating for some time, (now up to 2550 USCF), so it was not exactly a surprise. But still it is a very impressive feat for the 15-year-old prodigy who thus becomes the first Oklahoman to ever get the title.

Surely the Grandmaster title is not far away either. Indeed, if not for a last-round loss to top GM Sam Shankland he would have achieved his first GM norm this time.

On the way to his final norm he beat GM Sergei Azarov (2665), and IM Guillermo Vasquez (2588), and drew with IM Awonder

Answers to the Puzzles

(1) Kasparov returned last month to play in a top rapid tournament in St. Louis. He was rusty, but still finished in the middle of the pack ahead of top players like Anand. But here he lost to Nepomniaschi, who rocked him with 1…Re3! 2. fxe3, Qxg3+ 3. Kf1, f3! a deadly quiet move that threatens mate at g2 or e1, thanks to the bishop on b4. White resigned.

(2) This one is an example of the deadly "cross-pin" tactic. 1…Bf5+ forces white to block with 2. Bd3, which seems okay. But black destroys it with the cross-pin 2…Qe2! The bishop is pinned to both the K on b1 and the Q on a6. If 3. Bxf5 for example, 3…Qxa6 wins.

Liang (2638), GM Vladimir Belous (2645), GM Quesada Perez (2708), GM Elshan Moradiabadi (2599), and GM Bart Meceija (2609). A very impressive record indeed.

He immediately followed this up by winning the 2017 North American Junior (U20) Championship held in Dallas, September 1-5, which was an official FIDE championship that offered a prize of GM norm to the winner. (http://chess-results.com/tnr297814.aspx?lan=1&art=1&rd=9&wi=821)

If that is so, it shouldn't be long before he becomes America's next teenage GM!

The only game score available from the U.S. Masters is his complex game with Shankland:

GM Sam Shankland (2738)
IM-elect Advait Patel (2521)
U.S. Masters; 8/28/2017 Rd9

1. c4 g6 2. e4 Bg7 3. d4 d6 4. Nc3 Nf6 5. f3 O-O 6. Be3 a6 7. Qd2 Nc6 8. Nge2 Na5 9. Nf4 b5 10. h4 Nd7 11. h5 e5 12. Nfd5 exd4 13. Bxd4 Ne5 14. hxg6 fxg6 15. cxb5 axb5 16. Rd1 Nac6 17. Be3 b4 18. Nb5 Rxa2 19. Bh6 Bxh6 20. Qxh6 Rf7 21. Qc1 Be6 22. f4 Bxd5 23. exd5 Qe7 24. Be2 Ng4 25. dxc6 Ne3 26. Rd4 g5 27. Kf2 Nf5 28. Rxb4 g4 29. Bxg4 Ra1 30. Qc3 Rxh1 31. Bxf5 Rxf5 32. Nxc7 Qh4 33. Qg3 Qxg3 34. Kxg3 Rc5 35. Ne6 Rc2 36. Nd4 Rc5 37. Rb7 Rhc1 38. b4 R5c4 39. Nf5 Rxc6 40. Ne7 Kf8 41. Nxc6 Rxc6 42. b5 Rc5 43. b6 Rb5 44. Kf3 h5 45. Ke4 Ke8 46. f5 h4 47. f6 Kf8 48. Rb8 1-0

Sep 23-24 2017 Joplin MO
SW Missouri Diehards Fall Open

5-SS; G/90+30; Hilton Garden Inn, 2644 E. 32nd St., Joplin, MO 64804. **EF**: $40 if by 9/22, $50 at site. (Optional Scholastic (K-12), play for rating only, $20 if reg by 9/22, $30 at site). MCA memb required for MO residents; available on-site $5. $$**Prizes**: $200, $150; U1600 $100; U1400 $80; U1200/UNR $60 (5-0 Bonus: $40). **Rds**: Sat 10:00, 2:30, 7:00; Sun 9:30, 2:00. **Reg:** 8am-9:30am Saturday. (Advance registration preferred.) EF by check and cash only at site, if you have an up-to-date membership. **Info**: Martin Stahl, martin.stahl@joplinchess.org **TD:** M. Stahl (417) 483-1554 Please bring set, clock, board, and score sheets.

Oct 14 2017 Fort Smith AR
Arkansas-Oklahoma Friendly Feud for National Chess Day

One-day team chess events. Info: http://arkansaschess.net/events-upcoming-and-previous.html

JERRY SPANN MEMORIAL 2017

HOWARD ZHONG WINS
OSCAR WANG TAKES RESERVE SECTION

With a clutch last-round victory over Kansas City NM Abhishek Malella, **NM Howard Zhong** won the traditional title event held September 2-3 in Oklahoma City at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

The strong field included four Masters and featured a new location that proved to be popular with the players. OCF has negotiated a deal with the hotel for a package that would allow us to use the venue at least three times a year at a good price, and hopefully that will come to pass to support oft-neglected OKC chess.

Howard won $450 for his efforts and annotates his key last-round game for us (which will appear next month). (This issue of OCM was delayed a few days to allow news of this event, including here some photos and crosstables. There will be games next month.)

Tied for 2nd place with 3.5 were NM Malella, Expert Chibuzo Ilonze, and veteran A players James Long and Shaun Graham-Bowcaster. Martin Carlson and Jim Huang won the U1900 prize ($100 each).

Young Oscar Wang of Tulsa impressively won the Reserve Section with 4.5 ($170), defeating three higher-rated adults on the way including veterans Jared Ellis and James Rairden, and OU student Tanner Elias. Congrats Oscar!

The even-younger Kelvin Xie, one of two talented brothers, tied for second with 4 points, along with Jeremy L Brown.

Anna Boevers and Kersi Bharucha tied for 2nd place in the U1400, and Gabriel Teubner won the $100 U1100 prize with a nice 3-2 score.

Harold Brown of Tulsa donated $100 Best Game prizes for each section, which will be judged by the Tulsa Saturday Chess Club in coming weeks.

Crosstables Next Page

Zhong receives prize from Jim Berry. (Photo: Cheng Zhong)

Round 5, Bd1, NM Malella (left) vs. NM Zhong. (Photo: TB)

Rd3: NM Sergey Galant is defeated by Malella. (Photo: C. Zhong)

Jerry Spann Memorial

Open Section • Oklahoma City • Sept 2-3 2017 • TD: Braunlich, Berry

#	Player Name / USCF ID	Rtg (Pre->Post)	Total Pts	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5
1	HOWARD ZHONG	2257->2264	4.0	W 14	D 10	H	W 5	W 2
2	ABHISHEK MALLELA	2251->2249	3.5	W 15	W 11	W 18	D 4	L 1
3	CHIBUZO C ILONZE	2158->2147	3.5	D 16	D 20	W 8	W 6	D 4
4	JAMES LONG	1989->2010	3.5	D 13	W 16	W 10	D 2	D 3
5	SHAUN GRAHAM-BOWCASTER	1958->1987	3.5	W 22	W 6	H	L 1	W 11
6	THOMAS A PATTON	2080->2068	3.0	W 12	L 5	W 15	L 3	W 16
7	MICHAEL NUGENT	2077->2056	3.0	D 20	H	L 12	W 13	W 15
8	CHRISTOPHER DOOLEY	1931->1939	3.0	W 17	D 18	L 3	D 14	W 12
9	TOM BRAUNLICH	2203->2209	2.5	W 19	H	U	W 10	U
10	LOGAN ZACHARE	2008->2001	2.5	W 21	D 1	L 4	L 9	W 17
11	JOE DEAN VEAL	1991->1973	2.5	W 23	L 2	W 20	D 12	L 5
12	JIM HUANG	1708->1742	2.5	L 6	W 17	W 7	D 11	L 8
13	MARTIN CARLSON	1631->1673	2.5	D 4	H	D 19	L 7	W 23
14	JIM BERRY	1873->1879	2.0	L 1	W 21	H	D 8	U
15	SHO GLASHAUSSER	1842->1840	2.0	L 2	W 22	L 6	W 20	L 7
16	ERIC S EITRHEIM	1718->1746	2.0	D 3	L 4	H	W 19	L 6
17	MAXWELL BARNES	1317->1408	2.0	L 8	L 12	W 22	W 23	L 10
18	SERGEY GALANT	2203->2188	1.5	X	D 8	L 2	U	U
19	JUDSON TEMPLE	1905->1854	1.5	L 9	D 23	D 13	L 16	D 22
20	CURTIS WILLIAMS	1696->1704	1.5	D 7	D 3	L 11	L 15	D 21
21	LUKE M TRAN	1647->1630	1.5	L 10	L 14	W 23	L 22	D 20
22	RUBIN A WELLS	1560->1560	1.5	L 5	L 15	L 17	W 21	D 19
23	BRUCE WELLS	1604->1555	0.5	L 11	D 19	L 21	L 17	L 13
24	JIM HOLLINGSWORTH	1801->1801	0.0	F	U	U	U	U

Prize winners in the Open Section. From the Top: Carlsen, Long, Ilonze, Huang, Malella, Graham-Bowcaster (Photos by Cheng Zhong).

Jerry Spann Memorial

Reserve Section • Oklahoma City • Sept 2-3 2017 • TD: Braunlich, Berry

#	Player Name USCF ID / Rtg (Pre->Post)	Total Pts	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5
1	OSCAR WANG 1471->1554	4.5	W 22	D 2	W 6	W 7	W 4
2	KELVIN XIE 1379->1462	4.0	W 11	D 1	D 3	W 8	W 5
3	JEREMY L BROWN 1162->1371	4.0	D 5	W 13	D 2	W 14	W 9
4	JARED RAY ELLIS 1539->1546	3.5	W 19	W 8	W 7	D 5	L 1
5	NORMAN STYERS 1700->1657	3.0	D 3	W 20	W 14	D 4	L 2
6	JAMES RAIRDEN 1548->1503	3.0	L 9	W 15	L 1	W 22	W 11
7	TANNER ELIAS 1414->1412	3.0	W 10	W 17	L 4	L 1	W 14
8	KERSI BHARUCHA 1248->1254	3.0	W 18	L 4	W 19	L 2	W 16
9	ANNA BOEVERS 1160->1225	3.0	W 6	L 14	W 16	W 17	L 3
10	GABRIEL TEUBNER 1021->1092	3.0	L 7	L 16	W 22	W 13	W 17
11	TUSHAR LANKA 691 -> 837	2.5	L 2	D 18	W 15	W 12	L 6
12	REBECCA RUTLEDGE 523 -> 481	2.5	L 20	B	H	L 11	B
13	MARC CONAN WOOD 1453->1341	2.0	D 15	L 3	H	L 10	W 22
14	MAXWELL XIE 1254->1243	2.0	X	W 9	L 5	L 3	L 7
15	ALEX GLASHAUSSER 1172->1147	2.0	D 13	L 6	L 11	H	W 19
16	WYATT MANESS Unr ->1066	2.0	L 17	W 10	L 9	W 19	L 8
17	OMAR ABOUZAHR 1286->1148	1.5	W 16	L 7	H	L 9	L 10
18	HYRUM MOSES Unr -> 888	1.5	L 8	D 11	W 20	U	U
19	PHILIP M.STEGALL 1039-> 992	1.0	L 4	W 22	L 8	L 16	L 15
20	DAVID NORDAHL 550 -> 564	1.0	W 12	L 5	L 18	U	U
21	RICK KRIETEMEYER 958 -> 958	0.0	F	U	U	U	U
22	LESLIE A SMART Unr->599P5	0.0	L 1	L 19	L 10	L 6	L 13

Above Left: Key game in the reserve section — Jared Ellis (left) vs. Oscar Wang (right). Left: Anna Boevers
Right: Senior spectators J.A. Montero and Ross Carbonell. (Ross defeated Bobby Fischer in a 1964 Simul in Houson). Other spectators at the event included NM Bart Gibbons and Cairan O'Hare. (Photos by Cheng Zhong).

GAME OF THE MONTH

NM Ron Luther (2225) –

FM Advait Patel (2504) [C55]

2017 Kansas Open (3), 22.07.2017

By NM Ron Luther

It is not very often one gets an opportunity to play, let alone have a chance to beat, two 2500+ players within a six month period in the Midwest. If you play in a major chess community such as Chicago, St Louis, or Dallas, your chances rise greatly. After 1st winning a game vs GM Moradiabadi in Feb, in St Louis, I was paired against Advait Patel in the 3rd round of the Kansas Open in July.

After having been a Master for almost 35 years, one develops a sense of when "something should be there," something that senior master may have missed.

After the game my young opponent dismissed this notion, saying there was one position, that could have been drawn. However....

1.e4 e5 2.Bc4 Nf6 3.d3 Nc6 4.Nf3 Be7

(In our drawn game from the 2014 Missouri Open he played Bc5)

5.a4

I started playing this back in the 1990s before computer programs became prevalent. I dubbed it the "Nintendo Variation", due to one of the Chessmaster programs, on their early consoles. Could beat it with a pawn on a5. Now this move is all the rage in grandmaster chess! Should have applied for a Patent! 5...0-0 6.0-0 d5 7.exd5 Nxd5 8.a5 Bg4 9.c3 Rb8!? 10.h3 Bh5?!

[10...Be6] 11.Nbd2 Kh8 12.Re1 f6 13.Ne4 Bf7 14.Qc2

Other moves are: 14.b4; 14.Bd2; and 14.Bb5 Nxa5 15.Rxa5 c6 16.Rxa7 Qb6 17.Ra1 cxb5 18.d4 Seems to be not totally clear.

14...b5!?

Black tries to create something.

15.axb6 cxb6 16.Bb5 Na5 17.b4!?

[17.d4 (This makes more sense and seems to give white an advantage)] 17...a6!?

[17...Nc7= Seems better than the move played in the game.]

18.Bxa6 Bxb4 19.Qb2 [19.Rb1; 19.Bd2] 19...Be7 20.d4 b5 21.dxe5 Qb6 22.exf6 gxf6 23.Bh6!

23.Bxb5 Qxb5 24.Qxb5 Rxb5 25.Bh6 Rfb8 26.Nd4±

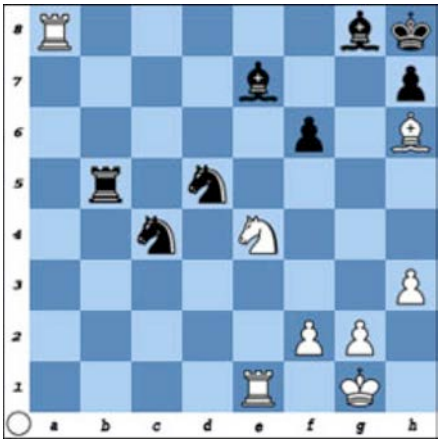
Ed.Note -my engine continues this line with 26...Nb3 27.Nxb5 Nxa1 28.Nbd6 Bg6 29.Rxa1 Nxc3 30.f3 and although white is a pawn up, it would be hard to win.]

23...Rg8

24.Nd4

The missed opportunity was this:

24.Qxb5! Qxb5 25.Bxb5 Rxb5 26.Nd4 Rgb8 27.Nxb5 Rxb5 28.c4! Nxc4 29.Ra8+ Bg8 I got to this position in my mind, but didn't see:



(Analysis position)

30.Nc3!! (Maybe due to the pawn originally being on c3, or just being tired after having already played two rounds earlier in the day.) 30...Ncb6

(30...Ra5 31.Rxa5 Nxa5 32.Nxd5 wins*;*

30...Nxc3 31.Rxe7 Rg5 32.Bxg5 fxg5 33.Ree8 wins*)*

31.Re8 and White is winning. For example; 31...Rc5 32.R1xe7 Nxe7 33.Rxe7 Bb3 *(33...Rg5 34.Bxg5 fxg5+)* 34.Ne4 Rc6 35.Bg7+ Kg8 36.Nxf6+ Rxf6 37.Bxf6+

24...Qxa6 25.Nf5 Bf8 26.Bxf8 Rgxf8 27.Qd2 Qb6 28.Qh6 Rg8 29.Rxa5 Rg6 [Ed. Note- Leading to a slight edge for Black is: 29...Bg6 30.Ned6 Qxa5 31.Re7! Rbf8 *(31...Nxe7? 32.Nf7+ Bxf7 33.Qxf6+)* 32.Rg7 Qa8≥ another wild line!

30.Qd2?

And here is where I missed... [30.Ned6! Rxh6 *(30...Qxa5 31.Nxf7+ Kg8 32.Qh4=)* 31.Nxf7+ Kg8 32.N7xh6+ Kf8 33.Raa1! (33.Rea1 Advait made mention of this position after the game, but Raa1 is stronger. 33...Re8= *(33...Nxc3? 34.Ra7+)*) 33...Re8 34.Red1±

30...Qxa5

(Now Black wins easily.)

31.Ned6 Bg8 32.Nh6 Qc7 0-1

Congrats to young Mr Patel!

His game with IM Brooks was also very crazy at times. Besides being a strong young player, he is very likeable. He is someone who represents Oklahoma well.

A word of advice though:

Never underestimate an Old Master!

Questions? Comments? ronaldluther @yahoo.com